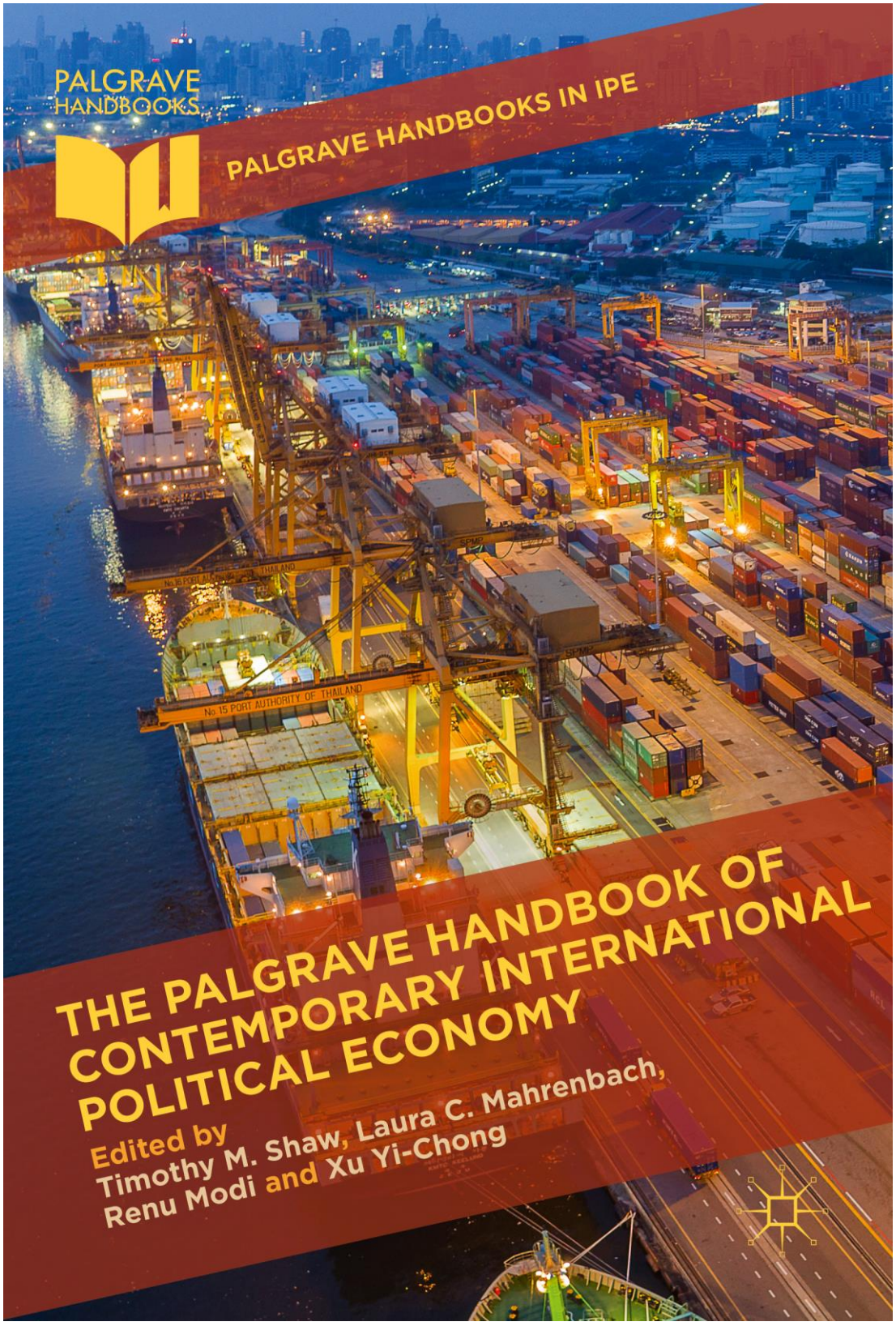
PALGRAVE
HANDBOOKS
PALGRAVE HANDBOOKS IN IPE
THE PALGRAVE HANDBOOK OF CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY
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Introduction

IPE and sustainability have co-evolved over the past 40 years under the twin pressures of ever-deepening neoliberal globalisation and environmental degradation. Globalisation has seen the massive expansion in international trade, investment and finance and an associated rise in international organizations, multinational corporations (MNCs) and civil society organisations. In conjunction with the development and spread of information and communications technologies, the global political economy has transnationalised giving rise to new forms of public, private and hybrid governance. Globalisation has been associated, however, with high levels of tropical deforestation, fisheries depletion, biodiversity loss and global warming. From a social justice perspective, deep-seated inequalities remain within and between countries in the Anthropocene (Biermann et al 2012), with coefficients of inequality now greater than they were at the outset of the globalisation push (Picketty 2014).

The negative trends associated with neoliberal globalisation have given rise to efforts to embed the environment as a category within IPE theory. Three established 'environmental' perspectives and one emerging 'sustainability' perspective can be identified: green mercantilism, liberal environmentalism, eco-socialism and sustainability governance. The first three build on well-established IPE approaches, integrating nature into pre-existing anthropocentric, state-centric theories; the latter, in contrast, builds on emerging practices to develop a more ecocentric, multi-actor approach. To illustrate the latter, I examine how sustainability governance is reconceptualising the trade-versus-environment debate in IPE.

IPE and Sustainability

Emerging as a distinct subdiscipline of international relations in the 1970s, IPE came under pressure in the 1980s to respond to the increasing number of environmental threats. The broad approach taken was to treat these as additional policy issues, manageable by states acting alone or in cooperation. This remains the dominant approach today despite its evident failure and

early recognition by Williams (1996) that environmental issues are different due to their 'uncertainty, uniqueness and irreversibility' and, one could add, scientific complexity.

Analysts focused initially on four issues (Young 1994): transboundary conflict (e.g. acid rain), tragedy of the commons (e.g. overfishing), natural resource exploitation (e.g. deforestation in the Amazon), and cross-sectoral (e.g. global trade policy). Conceptualised this way, solutions lay in national action coupled with international cooperation. This 'first-world' framing, however, was challenged by developing countries who considered the environment a 'luxury good', something affordable once hunger and poverty were tackled. In the early 1970s, such North/South disagreement threatened to derail the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (UNCHE), held in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1972.

Despite the challenges, many deemed UNCHE a success as it put the environment on the international agenda and agreed several important initiatives including establishing the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP). Despite UNEP's status as a 'program' not a specialised agency, and a budget a fraction of that required, it subsequently played a catalytic role in fostering international environmental action within the UN system. Under its leadership, the United Nations set up a World Commission on Environment and Development in 1982 chaired by Gro Harlem Brundtland, a former Norwegian Prime Minister. With high-level representation from countries around the world, including significant and effective representation from developing countries, the Brundtland Commission issued *Our Common Future* report in 1987.

The Brundtland Report aimed to reconcile First World concerns over environmental protection with developing country concerns over poverty. It did so by elaborating the idea of 'sustainable development', a concept derived from the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's 1980 *World Conservation Strategy*. The Brundtland Commission did not merely appropriate the sustainable development idea but transformed it from a 'limits to growth' approach to one that denied any contradiction between economic growth and environmental protection. Following Brundtland, the world accepted without much evidence that high rates of economic growth and extensive levels of environmental protection were compatible. The resultant 'compromise of liberal environmentalism' (Bernstein 2001) was on full display at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

In retrospect, UNCED constituted a high water mark in international environmental concern, the issue moving down the global agenda in the ensuing years. At the time, however, considerable optimism permeated state environmental agencies, business groups, and civil society organisations that the world had finally grasped the environmental challenge. Deals were struck on several high profile issues including the signing of the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); and states agreed to establish a new UN institution to oversee the implementation of Agenda 21, the Commission on Sustainable Development. While disappointment attended the failure to negotiate an international forestry agreement, the Global Forest Principles that substituted for it was considered a solid compromise to tackle deforestation and forest degradation under a new norm of sustainable forest management (Gale & Cadman 2014).

Building on UNCED's formulation of sustainable development as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs', analysts investigated processes of weak and strong 'ecological modernisation' (Mol & Spaargaren 2000). The distinction depends on whether nature, conceptualised as a form of capital, is substitutable for other types of manufacturing, human and social capital. Different conceptions of sustainable development were possible because UNCED was silent on capital substitutability and agnostic regarding the form of state. While a general preference for 'market-led' development strategies implemented by liberal democratic states existed, countries with developmental states employing state-owned enterprises, government planning and protectionism were not excluded. In short, as an 'essentially contested concept' capable of numerous, divergent meanings, the practice of sustainable development pivoted on whether it was framed within nationalist, liberal or socialist political economy (Dobson 1996; Jacobs 1999; Connelly 2007).

Despite an emerging consensus in policy circles that sustainable development is compatible with weak ecological modernisation, a critical tradition has consistently called the approach's feasibility into question. One of the earliest and most trenchant critiques was Redclift's (1987), who argued that 'development' must be 'subjected to redefinition, since it is impossible for accumulation to take place within the global economic system we have inherited without unacceptable environmental costs. Sustainable development, if it to be an alternative to unsustainable development, should imply a break with the linear model of growth and

accumulation that ultimately serves to undermine the planet's life support systems' (Redclift 1987, 4).

Such a break has yet to occur, however. IPE has contributed to this by aiming mostly to integrate nature into pre-existing frameworks based on established ways of thinking giving rise to forms of green mercantilism, liberal environmentalism, and eco-socialism. While vigorously disputing each other's conception of economic value each approach conceives economic value as *a priori* definable, humanistic and monistic (Gale 2018). Notably, liberal environmentalism treats economic value as synonymous with exchange value, employing cost-benefit analysis and contingent valuation to commensurate it in dollar terms. Following an analyses of conventional IPE responses, therefore, I outline a fourth approach, termed here sustainability governance, that builds on emerging consumption and production practices to develop a more integrated approach.

IPE Approaches to Sustainability

A variety of typologies have been used to categorise IPE responses to the environment. Williams distinguishes realist, liberal and Marxist perspectives noting that all three adopt a 'technocentric and anthropocentric approach to natural resource use' (1996, p. 48). The first two, being grounded in positivism and empiricism, are insufficiently attentive to the need for theoretical innovation and to the actual transformations occurring on the ground. Williams also criticises both of these approaches for embracing environmental economics, which treats the 'economic' and the 'ecological' as discrete phenomena arguing instead that 'economics and the environment are inseparable' and that 'the economy alters the environment and the environment in turn affects the economy' (Williams 1996, 56).

In their book *Paths to a Green World,* Clapp and Dauvergne (2005) distinguish between market liberalism, green socialism, bioenvironmentalism and institutionalism. Market liberalism 'is grounded in neoclassical economics and scientific research' and promotes market-led economic growth and high per capita incomes (Clapp & Dauvergne 2005, 4). In contrast, green socialists see inequality and environmental degradation as fused demonstrating a shared concern over 'inequality and the environmental consequences related to it' (Clapp & Dauvergne 2005, 12). These two approaches differ from bioenvironmentalism, which stresses 'the biological limits of the earth to support life' with a focus on 'limits to growth' and 'carrying capacity'; and from environmental institutionalism

which embraces ‘many of the broad assumptions and arguments of market liberals’ but stresses the need ‘for stronger global institutions and norms as well as sufficient state and local capacity to constrain and direct the global political economy’ (Clapp & Dauvergne 2005, xx).

To these IPE typologies can be added those used in the varieties of capitalism approach outlined in Nölke’s chapter (this volume). With a focus on the West, first-generation VoC analysts parsimoniously distinguished between liberal and coordinated market economies, the former mapping directly onto IPE’s liberal paradigm and the latter onto a social-democratic version of its socialist approach. Initially not covered in the VoC literature was IPE’s economic nationalist approach, but Nölke’s state-permeated market economy (SME) addresses this gap by identifying how China and India differ from Britain and Germany in financial openness and capital controls. The VoC approach has been applied to understand differences in environmental policy and practices: Mikler (2007) highlights differences in the strategies of American, German and Japanese automobile manufacturers that reflect the way they are regulated in their domestic economies. However, VoC’s inductive approach to identifying varieties of capitalism means there is no equivalent to Clapp & Dauvergne’s bioenvironmentalism and environmental institutionalism categories as neither of these are used by states to coordinate markets.

The account below builds on these typologies to assess recent developments in IPE and sustainability. To the conventional IPE categories of realism, liberalism and Marxism, I add two others: an ecologism category similar to Clapp and Dauvergne’s bioevironmentalist category and an emerging sustainability governance category that expands their category of environmental institutionalism to take account of emerging local, national and global public, and especially private, governance of production and consumption relations. I illustrate the implications of the latter approach by reviewing the trade versus environment debate in IPE theory and at the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Green Mercantilism

The core tenets of green mercantilism are grounded in IR Realism’s concern over order/disorder and its ontological privileging of the state over other forms of social organisation (Williams 1996; Vogler 2011). Green mercantilists share IR Realism’s broad understanding of the interstate system as characterised by anarchy where individual states must have enough

power to ensure their own survival. Under anarchy, conflict will occur between states over scarce natural resources such as oil, potable water and agricultural land. A focus of green mercantilists is on specific resource conflicts including Arctic and Antarctic oil supplies, water conflicts in the Middle East and Asia, and 'land grabbing' in Africa (e.g. Homer-Dixon 1991; Kugelman & Levenstein 2009). While green mercantilists are not alone in analysing such topics what marks this perspective out from others is the view that states respond to them strategically rather than cooperatively.

Significant differences can be observed between green mercantilists and other perspectives with regard to international trade policy. Green mercantilists view the economic, political and natural realms as fused, all three contributing to realising a state's 'productive powers' (List 1841) and enhancing its security. Consequently, a state's political, economic and environmental policies should align, which may require states to defect from free trade regimes and embrace protectionism. Given this perspective green mercantilists are able to explain, if not condone, why states like China limit the export of rare earth metals given the strategic importance of solar power; and why, given the domestic security ramifications of limiting carbon emissions, signatories to the Paris Climate Agreement prefer voluntary Nationally Determined Contributions over mandatory targets.

Liberal Environmentalism

In contrast to the statist focus of green mercantilism, liberal environmentalism examines global environmental cooperation using the lens of regime theory (e.g. Young 1989; Haas, Keohane & Levy 1993). Several features of the international political economy explain why such environmental cooperation is necessary. First, national production many generate negative externalities as when sulphur emissions from coal-fired generators deposit acid rain on neighbouring countries or when carbon emissions cause global warming and climate change. Second, open-access resources that lack clear public or private property rights as in high seas fisheries lead to a 'tragedy of the commons' (Hardin 1968) necessitating international agreements to regulate catch levels. Third, inter-state political and economic rivalry may threaten critical earth systems creating momentum to cooperate as in the case of the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources.

While liberal environmentalists recognise that markets fail and that state intervention to provide public goods and regulate negative externalities is required, they treat the free market

as essential to sustainability and promote market-based solutions to environmental problems. A practical example is the promotion of emissions trading schemes to tackle climate change. Observing that the atmosphere is an open-access resource and overused by individuals and firms as a sink for carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions, the liberal solution is for governments to legislate cap-and-trade emissions trading schemes to limit the total amount of GHGs a firm can release into the atmosphere (the cap element) and issue permits (the trade element) to enable companies to buy and sell pollution rights to meet firm-specific targets.

Eco-Socialism

In contrast to green mercantilists and liberal environmentalists, eco-socialists seek to promote environmental justice via a critique of capitalism and by proposing socialist alternatives (e.g. O'Connor 1988: Burkett 2009; Foster, Clark & York 2010). James O'Connor for example has identified a 'second contradiction of capitalism' in addition to a first contradiction between the 'forces' and 'relations' of production (O'Connor 1988). In conventional Marxist analysis, capitalism 'produces its own gravediggers' due to its inherent tendency to overproduction. In the drive to realise surplus value, competition forces capitalist businesses to over-produce, lowering prices and generating a realisation crisis. As businesses go bankrupt and unemployment increases, capitalists demand state intervention to bail them out exposing the myth of the self-regulating market.

Likewise, O'Connor argues there is a second contradiction of capitalism between the forces and relations of production on one hand and the conditions of production on the other. Unlike the first contradiction, this is a crisis of 'underproduction' because capitalist firms, locked into competitive markets, under-invest in maintaining the physical conditions of capitalist production—forests, fisheries, agricultural land, energy sources and so forth. Capitalist businesses, struggling to realise as much surplus value as possible, appropriate natural resources and waste sinks at exchange values significantly lower than their use values. However, by failing to recognise and take action to conserve resources and limit pollution, capitalists again become their own gravediggers as natural resource depletion and the accumulation of toxic waste necessitates state regulation and planning that once again undermines the myth of the self-regulating market.

At the global level, eco-socialism has been influenced by Robert Cox's neo-Gramscian approach to IPE (1981). Building on Cox's distinction between 'problem solving' and 'critical

theory', eco-socialists analyse how global capitalism generates ecological crises and injustice by supporting the neoliberal hegemonic order under *Pax Americana*. From this perspective, many international institutions identified by liberal environmentalists as contributing to sustainable development are critically reinterpreted as driving the world towards ever-deeper unsustainability. Organisations like the World Bank, IMF and WTO are viewed as enhancing capitalism's capacity to exploit workers and the environment in the periphery of the world capitalist system. Eco-socialists champion counter-hegemonic forces such as the World Social Forum which protests capitalist globalisation at international economic and environmental summits and promote prefigurative, alternative, cooperative production systems (Carroll 2010).

Ecologism

Ecologism takes issue with the anthropocentrism underpinning green mercantilism, liberal environmentalism and green socialism, claiming instead that nature is intrinsically valuable (e.g., Leopold 1949; Devall &Sessions 1985; Dobson 2007). The essential difference between these two views is captured in Aldo Leopold's 'land ethic':

> All ethics so far evolved rest upon a single premise: that the individual is a member of a community of interdependent parts… The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, water, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land… In short, the land ethic changes the role of *Homo sapiens* from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it. It implies respect for his fellow-members, and also respect for the community as such (Leopold 1949, 239-240).

Key ecological ideas of the 'land ethic' include a relational ontology, an extended concept of community and an alternative understanding of value. Dobson (2007, 2-3) builds on these ideas to distinguish 'environmentalism' from 'ecologism: the former 'argues for a managerial approach to environmental problems, secure in the belief that they can be solved without fundamental changes in present values or patterns of production and consumption', whereas the latter 'holds that a sustainable and fulfilling existence presupposes radical changes in our relationship with the non-human natural world, and in our mode of social and political life'.

Ecologism's focus on an extended natural-cultural community has generated proposals that operate mainly at sub-state levels of analysis. Social ecologists like Murray Bookchin (1982) and Deep Ecologists like Arne Naess (2005) champion small-scale, community-based, self-governing and self-sufficient political organisations, whereas Kirkpatrick Sale (1985) has

argued for a bioregional approach linked to natural boundaries like watersheds and Daly and Cobb (1989), develop the idea of a national 'community of communities'. As a result of its community and regional focus, ecologism is usually not identified as an approach in IPE. In addition, it does not engage with the core issues of interest to IPE scholars such as international trade, investment, monetary, aid and development policy. From an IPE perspective, since no state is run by a government promoting policies based on ecologism, there is no point in engaging with it theoretically. This lack of engagement on both sides is a problem, however, since neither side understands each other's core conceptual categories or concerns.

Sustainability Governance

In his analysis of IPE and the environment, Williams (1996, 55-56) calls for a new theoretical approach based on neo-Gramscian political theory and ecological economics (Williams 1996, 55-56). Yet no such theory has emerged in the past two decades. In the interim, a great deal of practical and theoretical work in 'sustainability governance' has occurred, which bears on many core IPE issues including trade, investment and monetary policy as well as the nature of the state and its relationship to MNCs and civil society organisations. In this section, I review the literature on 'sustainability governance' and illustrate its relevance to IPE as an emerging, alternative account of the sustainability challenge through an example of certified trade.

There are several good descriptions of the practice of sustainability governance in the literature at different levels of analysis. At the national level, Alperovitz (2014) provide excellent accounts of the US's social enterprise movement where 'people join together through some form of public, community, or employee-owned business to meet local needs and thereby regain a measure of local economic democracy and control' (Alperovitz 2014, 195). The institutional forms employed include 'community development corporations, community development financial institutions, social enterprises, community land trusts, employee-owned enterprises, and cooperatives' (Alperovitz 2014, 195). To this list can be added a range of other forms of community-based organising such as the transition town, slow food, farmers' market, organic and permaculture agriculture, community-supported agricultural, community gardens, bioregional, community energy, op shops, and public transport movements. What these initiatives have in common is the reinvigoration of low-throughput community provisioning rather than a reliance on external actors.

It is a mistake, however, to conceptualise sustainability governance as exclusively, community-based. Many participants exchange goods, services and experiences with distant others using private governance systems to make them more rewarding, fairer and more sustainable (Cashore, Auld & Newsom 2004; Gulbrandsen 2010; Cadman 2011; Gale & Haward 2011; Auld 2014). To ensure exchange meets these expectations, practitioners set standards backed by certification and labelling schemes to regulate the extraction, production, transportation, retail and disposal of the inputs necessary to yield the goods and services demanded and consumed. Two examples of global standards organisations are Fairtrade International and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Fairtrade International sets Fairtrade standards for its member organisations and in 2015, the sales revenue of Fairtrade products, mainly coffee, cocoa, bananas, tea, fruit and sugar, reached one billion dollars for the first time, up 14% over the previous year. FSC sets standards for the forest industry and has experienced similar growth with almost 200 million hectares of forest in 2017. A large number of other global standards organisations exist to regulate capture fisheries, farmed fisheries, sugar, palm oil, carpets and rug production and more.

Sustainability Governance and Trade

How does IPE analyse this emerging practice of 'certified trade'? If IPE textbooks are any guide, the answer is to ignore it. Whereas there is a great deal of coverage of 'free trade' versus 'protectionism' and the role of the World Trade Organisation in managing competing state interests, the rise in certified trade is rarely if ever analysed (but see Ervine & Fridell (2015) which includes a chapter on sustainable consumption). IPE's 'statist gaze' also limits its capacity to perceive certified trade arrangements which are mostly developed and promoted by business and civil society organisations. In the technical trade literature, and in addition to expressing a certain disdain for certified trade's significance because product volumes and dollar sales are currently a mere fraction of global totals, analysts adopt the generalised presumption that certified trade preferences are really protectionist trade preferences in disguise, again diminishing any challenge it presents to mainstream theory and practice (Ehrlich 2010).

The subsumption of certified trade into the free-trade versus protectionism debate is also evident at the WTO which has debated the protectionist potential of 'eco-labels' for over 20 years since they were placed on the agenda of the Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) in 1996. As the number and reach of eco-labels and associated certification and labelling

programs has grown, delegates expressed increasing concern at their trade distorting nature. Mavroidis and Wolfe cite the 'now famous' 2007 complaint of the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines delegation against the GlobalG.A.P agricultural standard that 'the proliferation of standards developed by private interest groups without any reference to the SPS Agreement or consultation with national authorities is a matter of concern and presents numerous challenges to small vulnerable economies' (2017, 2). Noting that 'voluntary standards' can be *de facto* obligatory for small producers who are at risk of being locked out of global value chains if they fail to comply with requirements, these authors examine how the WTO should respond to such 'behind the border', potentially market-restrictive measures.

From a sustainability governance perspective, certified trade is neither free-trade nor protectionist but expresses a desire to realise sustainability by ensuring one's market purchases, *whether domestic or international*, 'do no harm'. Building on the political consumption and ethical consumerism literatures (e.g. Stolle, Hooge & Micheletti 2005; Barnett, Cafaro & Newholm 2005), the approach recognises the existence of a segment of consumers who desire to go beyond basic, often compromised, national and international standards and discriminate between otherwise like products based on embodied and non-embodied process and production methods (ppms). Thus, instead of their being only two basic trade-related preferences there are four, characterised by Ehrlich (2010, 1021) as 'free traders', 'fair traders', 'general protectionists' and 'economic protectionists'. Beyond free-traders and general protectionists recognised by mainstream IPE, this typology identifies fair traders seeking certified products regardless of country of origin and economic protectionists seeking domestic products regardless of process and production methods.

The implications of certified trade for conventional trade theory are significant. According to the theory of comparative advantage, countries should specialise in the production of goods and services intensive in the factors in abundance, exchanging them for goods and services intensive in the factors they lack. It can be demonstrated that specialising in this way increases the total volume of goods in the system, and thus 'wealth' measured either in terms of the aggregate volume of goods or their exchange value equivalent. There is a very important underlying proviso, however, which is that use of the abundant factors is sustainable: that is, at a minimum, that the country's use of its renewable resources (forests, fisheries and soils) does not undermine the capacity to regenerate, depletion of non-renewable resources (oil, rare earth metals, minerals) occurs at an optimal rate, animal welfare is safeguarded and humans human

rights are respected. To the extent that these presumptions do not hold any increased production of goods and services comes at a significant cost to environmental, social and animal welfare.

A range of arguments are employed to rebut trade protectionist arguments and these are also deployed against certified trade (Bhagwati 1993; Krugman 1997). An important argument in favour of free trade derives from the Environmental Kuznets' Curve (EKC), which purports to demonstrate that it does not matter if two countries' initially diverge in their sustainability practices because trade, by promoting economic growth, leads to improved sustainability outcomes over time. This occurs because increased wealth shifts citizens' preferences in favour of the 'luxury good' of environmental protection while simultaneously enabling the increased tax revenue available to be deployed for abatement. Other identified positive effects of trade for sustainability are shifts from dirty to clean technologies, from manufacturing to services production, and from high to lower fertility rates. From this dynamic economic perspective, a poor country with less sustainable practices will automatically converge towards a rich country with more sustainable practices once it crosses some specific GDP per capita turning point.

However, the EKC argument is suspect given that empirical studies show that the posited effects vary from pollutant to pollutant, are weak to non-existent with regard to carbon dioxide and biodiversity loss, and may occur at turning points significantly higher than the modest ones initially estimated (Van Alstine & Neumayer 2008; Carson 2009; Lenzen et al 2012). As a consequence of these results, those studying the EKC have become increasingly cautious in interpreting its meaning, placing renewed emphasis on politics and policy. Carson (2009, 20) concludes pessimistically that the 'belief in an autonomous EKC relationship engendered an unfounded optimism that growth by itself would be helpful for the environment. As a result there was a lost decade or more during which environmental economists failed to focus on other potential driving forces behind changes in environmental quality within a country'. Van Alstine and Neumayer (2008, 56) state that 'we cannot take for granted that LDCs will experience an increased demand for environmental regulations. We need to consider what mechanisms are needed to translate society's preferences into policy-making'.

Taking certified trade seriously as an alternative to free trade or protectionism highlights an overlooked area for policy intervention—direct preference shaping. A focus on preference

shaping, however, raises many thorny questions concerning the factors influencing their formation (Jackson 2005) and the rights and freedoms of individuals (Thaler & Sunstein 2003). Thaler and Sunstein (2003) reconcile the latter tension in their 'libertarian paternalism' approach to policy and the 'nudge agenda' it has given rise to. Treating individuals as having potentially misguided preferences due to a range of cognitive biases (e.g. myside bias, present bias, confirmation bias) in making decisions concerning superannuation, diet and energy use, these authors argue in favour of altering default settings to encourage better decisions. Thus, given it is in society's interests that people donate their organs at death, opt-out not opt-in organ donations schemes should be set up since most people never get around to signing the required paperwork.

Thaler and Sunstein's approach fails to fully recognise the extent to which the now vast literature on the biological, behavioural, sociological and cultural bases of values, attitudes, beliefs and preferences undermines conventional notions of human rationality upon which a great deal of IPE thinking is based including, of course, liberal environmentalism's rational utility maximising individual. Pushed further, Stanovich (2003) identifies two major deficiencies: 'mindware gaps' and 'mindware contamination'. Mindware gaps are a product of the kind of biases identified by Thaler and Sunstein whereas mindware contamination is more insidious and due to religious, mystical and magical thinking which explicitly forbids questioning by 'promising rewards for unquestioning faith in the memeplex' (Stanovich 2009, p. 76). These ideas are taken even further by Gale (2018), who argues that the new literature on human preference formation necessitates a complete rethinking of aggregative notions of consumer and political sovereignty and necessitates a shift to more deliberative forms of economic and political valuation (Martinez-Alier, Munda & O'Neill 1998; Spash 2008).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that IPE continues to theorise sustainability from within mainstream perspectives employing well-developed modernist constructs such as the unitary state, the rational individual, and a singular capitalist trajectory. While there are now 'green' versions of realism, liberalism and socialism, these approaches have overlooked the actually existing political economy of sustainability that is emergent within the interstices of a disintegrating neoliberal global capitalist world order. The only approach to take this emerging political economy of sustainability seriously has been the sustainability governance approach

due to its focus on certified trade which it distinguishes from free trade and protectionism alike. However, more research is required on this sustainability governance approach and especially the implications of the new biological, social, cognitive and cultural literatures for the contingency and lack of reflexivity of individual preference formation. If aggregating non-reflective and likely erroneous individual preferences into group preferences no longer tells us much about what people want economically and politically, then much greater attention needs to be paid to alternative theories of the democratic then IPE has done heretofore.

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